

GOLDEN GAZETTE

A Monthly Newspaper for Senior Adults in the Fairfax Area

JULY 2006

Serving Seniors for 30 Years

VOL. 30, NO. 3

Hospice Choice

by Sarah S. Parks, J.D., LL.M.

Peter and Gwen Culver are in their mid-seventies, living independently, although Gwen suffers from congestive heart failure. The Culvers' doctor, Erin Marsh, has explained to the Culvers that Gwen's heart problems can be treated for a period of time, but not cured. She is concerned about Gwen's advancing congestive heart failure, and also about the physical toll that caring for Gwen is having on Peter's health. After a particularly bad "spell," Dr. Marsh informs the Culvers that Gwen's health has deteriorated to the point that the medications used to treat the disease are no longer effective, and there is nothing more she can do. She believes that it is an appropriate time for the Culvers to consider hospice services for Gwen.

Dr. Marsh explains that hospice care is provided for individuals when the terminal illness will most likely end the patient's life within 6 months. Dr. Marsh states that the severity of Gwen's congestive heart failure has reached that point, and that she will refer them to a hospice program. The Culvers are stunned, and not entirely

Cont. p. 9

This is an abridged version with links to senior centers and county tours. Policy prohibits publishing the ads that are included in the print version.

If you would like to receive the print version on a monthly basis, please e-mail kathy.wilson@fairfaxcounty.gov. It's free!

Large-print and recorded formats also are available.

Seniors On-The-Go! Update

An emergency fuel surcharge of \$1.00 on all Fairfax County taxicab rides was voted on and passed by the Board of Supervisors effective June 6-July 31, 2006. During this period, the Fairfax County Department of Cable Communication and Consumer Protection will continue to monitor the cost of fuel to make a long-term recommendation to the Board regarding an extension of the fuel surcharge.

It is anticipated that the fuel surcharge will be extended beyond July 31 through January 31, 2007. This will be the third time in recent years that a fuel surcharge has been placed on taxicab rides in Fairfax County. There was a \$0.50 fuel surcharge in place from July 1 through December 31, 2004, and the more recent \$1.00 fuel surcharge from October 18, 2005, through April 30, 2006. In the June 2006 issue of the *Golden Gazette*, readers were informed that current fuel costs would most likely result in the re-establishment of the fuel surcharge.

On July 31, 2006, the Board of Supervisors will hold a public hearing regarding an extension of the fuel surcharge, as well as what the surcharge cost will be starting August 1. In anticipation of the new surcharge, **Seniors On-The-Go!** is again sending its users coupon booklets with 11 coupons instead of the customary 10 that are usually issued when there is no fuel surcharge.

Please continue to check the *Golden Gazette* each month for updates. You also may call the Fairfax County Department of Transportation at **703-324-1172** (TTY 703-324-1102) for further information. The Web address is www.fairfaxcounty.gov/fcdot/whatsnew.htm.



GOLDEN GAZETTE

Published by the

COUNTY OF FAIRFAX, VIRGINIA

Department of Family Services

FAIRFAX AREA AGENCY ON AGING

12011 Government Center Parkway

Suite #708

Fairfax, VA 22035-1104

Telephone: 703-324-5411

Toll-Free: 1-866-503-0217

TTY: 703-449-1186

FAX: 703-449-8689

Web Site: www.fairfaxcounty.gov/aaa. The Golden Gazette is online.

The *Golden Gazette* is a free, monthly newspaper dedicated to serving persons age 60 and over in Fairfax County and the cities of Fairfax and Falls Church.

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Publication of advertising contained herein does not constitute endorsement.



To comply with the Americans With Disabilities Act, the *Golden Gazette* is available in large-print and recorded formats. Call **703-324-5633** to request an alternative format.

DEADLINES

ALWAYS the first of the month a month in advance (for ads, ad payments, and announcements).

The next deadline is August 1 for the September issue.

ADDRESS ADDITIONS/CORRECTIONS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

Although the *Golden Gazette* accepts limited paid advertisements, reader contributions are critical to ensure continuation of the publication. We are very grateful to all of you who do send contributions, regardless of the amount (the average contribution is about \$7.00). **Please note that contributions are entirely voluntary.**

If you have an address change, are receiving duplicates, or if you would like to make a contribution, please complete the form below and mail to: ***Golden Gazette, Area Agency on Aging, 12011 Government Center Parkway, Suite 708, Fairfax, VA 22035-1104.*** Checks should be made payable to **Fairfax County**. Please list your current address below or attach your mailing label and check the appropriate lines. If you prefer to call about address changes, the number is **703-324-5633**.

____ Contribution check attached.
____ I am NOT currently on your mailing list. Please add my name and address.
____ I am already on your mailing list.
____ I am moving. My new address in the Fairfax area will be:
NAME _____
CURRENT ADDRESS _____ Zip: _____
NEW ADDRESS (if applicable) _____ Zip: _____
TELEPHONE (in case we have a question) _____

The names and addresses of persons receiving the *Golden Gazette* are subject to disclosure pursuant to the Virginia Freedom of Information Act, VA Code Sec. 2.1-340 thru 346.1. Inquiries or complaints concerning this policy should be directed to the Fairfax Area Agency on Aging, 12011 Government Center Parkway, #708, Fairfax, VA 22035-1104.

The Fairfax Area Agency on Aging contracts with Southern Maryland Printing in Waldorf, MD, for printing and mailing services.

Commission on Aging Monthly Meeting

The Fairfax Area Commission on Aging (COA) will meet on **Wednesday, July 19, 1:00 p.m.**, at Supervisor Bulova's office, Braddock Hall (adjacent to the Kings Park Library, 9002 Burke Lake Road, Burke). A public comment period is held at the beginning of each meeting. (Note: The COA meets on the third Wednesday of each month, **except August.**)

Call **703-324-7746** for information or to be placed on the mailing list. If you need a sign language interpreter or any special accommodation or auxiliary aid, please call the Fairfax Area Agency on Aging at **703-324-5411** (voice) or **703-449-1186** (TTY) at least five working days in advance of the meeting. There is no charge for these services.

Fan Care and Cooling Assistance Programs

Summer heat and humidity can be physically stressful and dangerous to the frail elderly. To help ensure their health and comfort, the Fairfax Area Agency on Aging (AAA) announces the 16th year of the Fan Care Program, an electric fan and window air-conditioner distribution program sponsored by Dominion Virginia Power, in partnership with the Virginia Department for the Aging.

This program runs from June 1 to September 30, 2006. The AAA purchases fans and air conditioners and makes them available, free of charge, to income-eligible seniors who have an existing home situation that presents a threat to their well being. The fans and air conditioners become the property of the individual. Arrangements can be made for a fan or an air conditioner to be delivered to those individuals who are unable to pick them up from our offices.

The Summer Cooling Assistance Program, funded by the Virginia Department of Social Services, assists income-eligible households with cooling equipment and services and/or payment of an electric bill. This program runs from June 15 to August 15, 2006. Funds for this program are very limited. Completed applications will be processed in turn until funds run out.

To qualify for either program, a person must be at least 60 years of age and have a combined monthly family income of no more than \$1,225 for a household of one, \$1,650 for a household of two, or \$2,075 for a household of three, etc. Not all persons in the home need to be elderly to qualify.

To request an application, call **703-324-7694**. Please leave your name, phone number, address, and indicate the program in which you are interested.

Polling Places Change for Some County Voters

Because of population growth in Fairfax County and overcrowding at existing polling places, the Office of the General Registrar has made changes to four polling place locations. Another polling place has been re-named. New voter cards were mailed to all voters in the affected precincts. Here are the changes:

◆ Hunter Mill District

The polling place for 235 Frying Pan precinct, which previously voted at McNair Elementary School, will now vote at the Visitor Center at Frying Pan Farm Park, 2739 West Ox Road, Herndon.

◆ Lee District

Franconia Precinct (404) will continue to vote at 6450 South Van Dorn Street, Alexandria, but the name of the building has been changed to Snyder Center. It was previously called the Kingstowne North Center.

◆ Mount Vernon District

Lorton precinct has been divided. Voters east of I-95 remain in 617 Lorton and vote at the Lorton Library located at 9520 Richmond Highway. Voters west of I-95 will be placed in the new 628 Laurel Hill precinct and vote at the South County Secondary School, 8501 Silverbrook Road.

The polling place for 625 Lorton Center precinct, which previously voted at Lorton Station Elementary School, will now vote at Grace Bible Church, 7795 Grace Church Lane, Lorton. The church faces Lorton Station Road near the new Lorton Town Center and the VRE station.

Maps and directions to all Fairfax County precincts and polling places are on the Web at: www.fairfaxcounty.gov/eb/precincts.htm.

Information is available on the Office of the General Registrar Web page at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/eb or by calling **703-222-0776**, TTY 711.



LAURA KUNKEL—VOLUNTEER OF THE MONTH

by Leslie Trettau, Volunteer Reporter/Photographer

Laura Kunkel started with the Meals on Wheels Program in 1971 after hearing about it in her church. She lived overseas in Turkey and the Philippines for a few years, returning in 1978 where she again took up her mission of delivering food to those in need. She says it makes her feel good to see how much her presence is appreciated by the meal recipients. Through the program, she has met a lot of interesting people, in particular a lady from Budapest. She looks forward to getting to know these people and thinks their life stories are like reading a wonderful book. Laura also volunteers for the Adapted Aquatics Program where she helps teach children with disabilities water safety and swimming. Some of these kids go on to the Special Olympics.

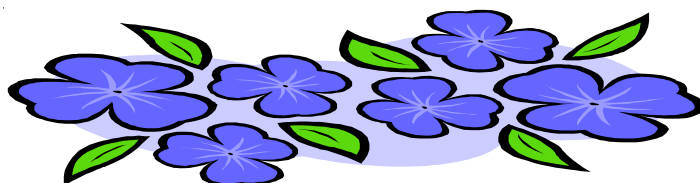
Laura was born and raised in Colorado and as a child was taught to help people. She attended Colorado State University, the University of Wisconsin, and George Mason University. She has a graduate degree in education and has taught English as a second language. Currently she is a special education teacher at the Carlin Springs School in Arlington County working with kindergartners and first graders.

Laura lives in Annandale where she shares her life with a cuddly 13-year-old dog who is a chow/shepherd mix. She has four adult children (two sons and two daughters) and a brand-new grandchild named Lucas. This grandmother lights up when she talks about the latest addition to their family!

Her hobbies include knitting, gardening, animals, quilting, sewing, and reading. She has made clothes for herself and her children as well as quilted

things such as book bags. She also enjoys book clubs and book discussion groups.

Laura has a strong sense of community and of people helping each other. She recommends that people get involved because, "Volunteering makes you feel better about how you are handling your part of the world."



Elder Crafters Celebrates 25 Years of Helping Seniors With Crafting

Elder Crafters is a nonprofit craft store that takes handmade items on consignment from all kinds of crafters. It features unique gifts, baby items, wooden crafts, quilts, ceramics, jewelry, etc.

The store is run by volunteers and is open from 12:00-5:00 p.m., Tuesday-Friday; 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m., Saturday; and 1:00-5:00 p.m., Sunday.

Come shop at the store at 405 Cameron Street, Alexandria (across from Gadsby's Tavern). Bring your handmade items to sell, or you can volunteer. For information, call **703-683-4338**.

Real Estate Tax Relief

FOR SENIORS AND PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Fairfax County provides real estate tax relief to residents who are either 65 or older, or permanently and totally disabled, and meet certain income and asset eligibility requirements.

- First-time filers have until December 31 of the current tax year to file.
- Normally, returning applicants must file between January 1 and April 1. However, the Board of Supervisors extended the deadline to apply for 2005 until December 31, 2006, for first-time filers and cases of hardship. This is because the net asset limit was increased in October 2005.

To qualify for real estate tax relief, the following requirements must be met:

<u>Gross Household Income</u>	<u>Amount of Relief</u>
\$52,000 or less	100%
\$52,001-\$62,000	50%
\$62,001-\$72,000	25%

- For each relative (other than spouse) residing in the dwelling, the first \$6,500 of income may be excluded. Disabled applicants may exclude the first \$7,500 of income.
- The total combined net assets of owners of the dwelling and of the spouse of any owner who resides in the dwelling may not be greater than \$340,000. (Excluding the value of the dwelling, its furnishings, and up to one acre of land where it is situated.)
- If the dwelling is jointly owned by an applicant and spouse, either the applicant or the spouse must be at least 65 years of age or older, or permanently and totally disabled.

Applicants with disabilities must show either a Veterans Administration, Railroad Retirement Board or Social Security Certification of Disability, or submit sworn affidavits from two doctors licensed to practice in Virginia, or military doctors, verifying permanent and total disability.

Other Tax Relief Programs

Qualified taxpayers also may be eligible for rent relief, personal property tax and decal fee relief.

You may obtain tax relief applications Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m. from the Department of Tax Administration, 12000 Government Center Pkwy., Ste. 223, Fairfax.

Telephone: **703-222-8234**; TTY 703-222-7594; Español **703-324-3855**. Web site: www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dta.

Fairfax Connector Offers Free Rides to MetroAccess Users

There is a new transportation option for Fairfax County residents who are MetroAccess clients. Effective July 1, 2006, current registered MetroAccess users may board any Fairfax Connector bus route at no charge. This action, approved by the Board of Supervisors on May 1, 2006, was taken to enhance the transportation options for Fairfax County citizens who are disabled. In addition, a companion also may ride with a MetroAccess registered customer at no charge, as long as the companion boards and disembarks a Connector bus at the same time as the MetroAccess user.

For Fairfax County MetroAccess users who would be interested in using the Fairfax Connector but are unfamiliar with the system, there is a travel training program managed by the Department of Transportation. For information, call **703-324-1439**. If you are interested in registering as a MetroAccess user, call the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (METRO) at **301-562-5360**.

SENIOR CENTER HIGHLIGHTS



These programs are administered by the Department of Community & Recreation Services, with the exceptions of the City of Fairfax and the City of Falls Church senior centers and the Gum Springs Community Center. If participation accommodations are needed in accordance with the Americans With Disabilities Act, please call 703-324-5544 or TTY 703-222-9693 at least 10 working days in advance of the event. **All events are free unless otherwise noted.** *The symbol RR means reservations are required.* These are just a few of the activities offered. Call the center nearest you for a complete listing or if you have questions. Senior Centers will be closed on Tuesday, July 4.

Bailey's
Bailey's Community Center
5920 Summers Lane
Bailey's Crossroads, VA 22041
Phone: 703-820-2131

Wednesdays 11:00 a.m., Chair Aerobics.
 Tue./Thur. 10:00 a.m., Looking for Beginning Bridge Players/Instructor.
 Mon. 7/3 12:30 p.m., Independence Day Party & Ice Cream Social.
 Mon. 7/10 12:45 p.m., CVS Pharmacist, *Hypertension and Screening*.
 Fri. 7/21 11:30 a.m., *Safe Steps* – Falls Prevention Video for Seniors.
 Fri. 7/28 1:00 p.m., July Birthday Celebration.

City of Fairfax
4401 Sideburn Road
Fairfax, VA 22030
Phone: 703-359-2487

Thursdays 11:30 a.m., Easy Strength Training. \$10/Month.
 Wed. 7/5 10:30 a.m., 4th of July Hawaiian Luau. \$5.
 Wed. 7/12 11:00 a.m., Musical Performance by Linda Kellner. \$3 Lunch.
 Thur. 7/20 9:30 a.m., Montpelier Mansion & Needleart 2006 Exhibit. Laurel, MD. Lunch at Local Restaurant on Your Own. \$5. (RR)
 Fri. 7/21 11:00 a.m., Andrew Acosta String Band With Speedy Tolliver. \$3 Lunch.

City of Falls Church
223 Little Falls Street
(Next to City Hall)
Falls Church, VA 22046
Phone: 703-248-5020/5021
 Blood pressure checks
 10:00-11:30 a.m.
 2nd and 4th Fridays

Mon. 7/10 12:30 p.m., Lunch Bunch at Agria's. (RR)
 Thur. 7/13 1:00 a.m., Celebrating the USA. (RR by 7/6)
 Fri. 7/21 0:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m., Armchair Travel: Australia.
 Fri. 7/28 10:15 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Bowling. (RR)
Special July Trips (Call for details)
 Baltimore Inner Harbor
 Historic Occoquan

Franconia/Springfield
6300 Beulah St.
Alexandria, VA 22310
Phone: 703-924-9762

Tuesdays 10:00 a.m., Looking for Bridge Players—All Levels!
 Tue. 7/18 10:00 a.m., Travel Training Trip. (RR)
 Wed. 7/19 11:00 a.m., Strength Training With Anne.
 Fri. 7/21 10:30 a.m., Line Dancing With TJ. (RR)
 Fri. 7/21 12:30 p.m., Bingo.

Groveton at South County
8350 Richmond Highway
Ste. 325
Alexandria, VA 22309
Phone: 703-704-6216

Tuesdays 10:15 a.m., Springfield Mall. \$. (RR)
 Wednesdays 10:30 a.m., Bridge—Looking for New Players!
 Wednesdays. 11:00 a.m., Computer Coaching by Appointment.
 Wednesdays 2:30 p.m., New Time! Ballet & Stretch.
 Thursdays 1:00 p.m., Conversational Spanish With Julia.

S E N I O R C E N T E R

Gum Springs

Gum Springs Community Center
8100 Fordson Road
Alexandria, VA 22306
Phone: 703-360-6088

Mondays	10:00 a.m., Sewing and Quilting.
Tuesdays	10:30 a.m., Ceramics.
Wednesdays	10:30 a.m., Shopping/Bowling (Alexandria Bowling Center).
Thursdays	1:00 p.m., Bingo.
Fridays	10:00 a.m., Low-Impact Exercise.

Herndon Senior Center

873 Grace Street
Herndon, VA 20170
Phone: 703-464-6200

Mon. 7/3	11:00 a.m., <i>Patriotic Salute</i> Sing-Along.
Tue. 7/11	12:45 p.m. CVS Presents <i>Hypertension</i> .
Mon. 7/17	1:00 p.m., <i>Water—Staying Hydrated This Summer!</i>
Wed. 7/19	11:00 a.m., Salute to Summer With the Cardinal Cloggers.
Wed. 7/26	1:00 p.m., How to Make an Emergency Preparation Kit.

Hollin Hall

1500 Shenandoah Road
Alexandria, VA 22308
Phone: 703-765-4573

Tuesdays	1:00 p.m., Art Workshop—Intermediate/Advanced Students.
Wednesdays	9:00 a.m., Shuffleboard With Art. Beginners Welcome.
Tue. 7/11	11:00 a.m., Lighthouses Across America Club. (RR)
Tue. 7/18	11:00 a.m., Opera Appreciation. (RR)
Thur. 7/27	1:15 p.m., CVS Presents <i>Hypertension</i> . (RR)

James Lee

James Lee Community Center
2855 Annandale Road
Falls Church, VA 22042
Phone: 703-534-3387

Mondays	9:15 a.m. and 10:15 a.m., Yoga I. (RR)
Mondays	12:30 p.m., Hawaiian Dance Class. (RR)
Mon.-Fri.	9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m., Fitness Center.
Mon.-Fri.	10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., Rummikub Club.
Tuesdays	9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m., Bridge.
Wednesdays	12:30 p.m., Tai-Chi; 1:30 p.m., Tai-Chi II. (RR)
Thursdays	10:30 a.m., Advanced Line Dancing. (RR)
Fridays	12:30 p.m., Ballroom Dancing Class.
Fridays	12:30 p.m., Tai-Chi; 1:30 p.m., Tai-Chi II. (RR)

Lewinsville

1609 Great Falls Street
McLean, VA 22101
Phone: 703-442-9075

Mon. 7/3	12:30 p.m., Independence Day Party.
Mon. 7/10	11:15 a.m., CVS Presents <i>Hypertension</i> .
Thur. 7/13	10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m., Glucose Testing (fast 2 hours) and Blood Pressure Check. (RR)
Fri. 7/14	12:30 p.m., Bastille Day Celebration.
Thur. 7/27	1:00 p.m., Area Agency on Aging Presents Resources for Low Vision.
Mon. 7/31	12:30 p.m., July Birthday Party.

Lincolnia

4710 North Chambliss St.
Alexandria, VA 22312
Phone: 703-914-0223

Tuesdays	10:00 a.m. Square Dancing. No Partner Required. \$.
Thursdays	12:00 p.m., Duplicate Bridge. No Partner Required. \$2.
Fri. 7/7	1:00 p.m., Monthly Birthday Party/New Member Welcome.
Tue. 7/11	10:30 a.m., CVS Presents <i>Hypertension</i> . (RR)
Tue. 7/11	10:30 a.m., Free Blood Pressure Checks (Walk in).

HIGHLIGHTS CONTINUED

Little River Glen
4001 Barker Court
Fairfax, VA 22032
Phone: 703-503-8703

Blood Pressure Checks
10 a.m., 2nd & 4th Fridays

Wed. 7/5 1:00 p.m., Little River Glen Chorus Performance.
 Thur. 7/6 1:00 p.m., Monthly Birthday Party With Aaron & Claudia.
 Tue. 7/11 1:00 p.m., CVS Presents *Hypertension*.
 Fri. 7/14 9:30-11:30 a.m., Glucose Testing (fast for 2 hours). (RR)
 Thur. 7/27 1:00 p.m., Area Agency on Aging Presents Resources for Low Vision.

Lorton
7722 Gunston Plaza
Lorton, VA 22079
Phone: 703-550-7195

Wed., 7/26, 10:00 a.m.,
Trip to Cracker Barrel
Restaurant. \$1. (RR)

Tue. 7/11 10:30 a.m., New Class, PACE (People With Arthritis Can Exercise). \$5/8 Classes. (RR)
 Thur. 7/13 10:00 a.m., Excel Workshop: *How to Track Medical Expenses for Tax Purposes*. (RR)
 Thur. 7/13 12:30 p.m., Housing & Assisted Living Panel Discussion. (RR)
 Fri. 7/21 10:00 a.m., 1950s Sock Hop, Music by DJ Steve. Enjoy the "Soda Shop" After Lunch. (RR)
 Tue. 7/25 10:00 a.m., Guide to Buying Computers. \$2. (RR)

Pimmit Hills
7510 Lisle Avenue
Falls Church, VA 22043
Phone: 703-734-3338

Fri. 7/7 10:30 a.m., Asian Food Shopping. \$1 Bus.
 Mon. 7/10 11:00 a.m., Jazzercise Class.
 Mon. 7/17 1:00 p.m., Line Dancing Class.
 Mon. 7/17 10:00 a.m., Ceramics Class. (RR)
 Mon. 7/24 10:30 a.m., Tai Chi.

Sully
5690 Sully Road
Centreville, VA 20124
Phone: 703-322-4475/4479

Mon. 7/3 10:30 a.m., Independence Day Picnic.
 Wed. 7/5 10:00 a.m., Open Billiards on Our New Brunswick Table.
 Tue. 7/11 11:30 a.m., *Staying Hydrated* With Nutritionist.
 Thur. 7/27 10:00 a.m., Trip: Battlefield Shopping Center & Golden Corral. \$1 + Lunch on Your Own.
 Mon. 7/31 10:30 a.m., Reike—Learn Ancient Art of Energy, Focus and Well-Being. \$5/8 Sessions.

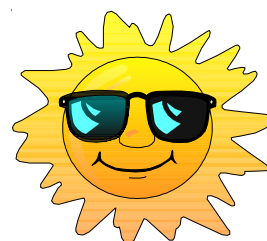
Wakefield
Audrey Moore RECenter
8100 Braddock Road
Annandale, VA 22003
Phone: 703-321-3000

Thursdays 12:30 p.m., Jazzercise With Peggy. \$5/8 Weeks. (RR)
 Thursdays 12:30 p.m., Beginner's Bridge.
 Wed. 7/12 11:00 a.m., Guest Speaker: *Wise Use of Your Meds*.
 Thur. 7/13 10:30 a.m., Enjoy the Great Music of David Lovins. (RR)
 Tue. 7/18 10:00 a.m., Trip: Smithsonian Museum of Natural History. \$1. (RR)
 Tue. 7/25 10:30 a.m., Entertainment With Matt and Jasmine.

Additional Locations for Meals/Other Activities

David R. Pinn Community Center
10225 Zion Drive
Fairfax, VA 22032
Phone: 703-250-9181

Huntington Community Center
5751 Liberty Drive
Alexandria, VA 22303
Phone: 703-960-1917



Hospice Choice *Cont. From p. 1*

comfortable with enrolling Gwen in hospice services, as this would mean acceptance that her death is close.

The Culvers' daughter, Susan, decides to research hospice programs in the Northern Virginia area. She finds that hospice organizations provide many services to end-of-life patients and their families as they go through this difficult time. Rather than being a place, hospice organizations provide services to terminally ill patients in their homes, in hospitals, nursing homes, assisted living facilities, and even in prisons. The focus of hospice care is providing dignity and self-determination for the patient, while managing pain and other symptoms that accompany the end of life. Hospice neither prolongs life nor hastens death, so hospice services are not focused on curing a condition or illness, but simply allowing the patient to live out the remainder of his or her life in comfort and with dignity, surrounded by family and friends who are encouraged to be part of the caregiving process.

Susan finds that patient services provided by hospice organizations include the management of the pain and symptoms of illness, providing medical personnel, medications, medical supplies and medical equipment needed for the care of the terminal illness. In addition to medical support, hospice organizations provide the services of chaplains and social workers to help the patient and the patient's family adjust to the reality of death and to help them cope with the physical and emotional issues surrounding the dying process. Hospice services also include inpatient care for the patient during periods of acute illness and/or for caregiver respite, and spiritual, bereavement, and other counseling services for the patient and family members.

Hospice services are paid for through the Medicare Hospice Benefit, Medicaid Hospice Benefit, and most private insurers. For hospice patients over the age of 65 who are covered by Medicare Part A, the out-of-pocket costs of hospice care are largely eliminated. If the hospice patient suffers any illnesses or medical issues not associated with the terminal diagno-

sis, Medicare or private insurers will still continue to insure.

Susan discovers that there are a number of hospice organizations in the area. After interviewing the different hospice organizations, the Culvers discover that even though the organizations provide essentially the same services, each organization has a slightly different character. The Culvers ultimately choose Sundown Hospice, which they like because of their commitment to providing consistent caregivers, adapting to the schedule and needs of the family and ensuring very personal service.

During the intake session, the Sundown Hospice personnel explain the hospice program to the Culvers, and discuss Gwen's wishes for her end-of-life care. Gwen has signed an Advance Health Care Directive, in which she has chosen Peter to make medical decisions for her if she cannot make them herself. Gwen is reassured that she will be made comfortable without any medical treatments or life support procedures to prolong her dying process. Gwen is examined by the Sundown nurse, interviewed by the Sundown social worker and visited by the Sundown chaplain so that a care plan can be established for Gwen's benefit, doing all that is possible to meet the individual needs of Gwen and her family.

Sundown arranges to have caregivers to help the family learn to care as much as they can for Gwen, with the addition of nursing assistants who will come in several times per week to bathe Gwen and perform other necessary tasks. The Sundown nurse will come twice per week at first, and more frequently as the disease progresses. Sundown has a 24-hour on-call nurse who will be available for any emergencies or questions the Culvers have during nonbusiness hours. If a medical doctor is needed, Sundown's medical director is available as well.

As the Culvers settle into a routine with Sundown personnel, they feel fortunate to have found such a caring and compassionate organization. Their needs are met and their questions answered by people they have come to view as

Cont. p. 10

Hospice Choice *Cont. From p. 9*

extended family. Their nurse just “drops in” to check on Gwen when she is in the area, and provides additional emotional support and care for the family.

Their routine is shattered, however, when Gwen’s condition takes a sudden downturn. Peter can no longer care for Gwen at home, and the family begins looking for a nursing home for Gwen. Peter’s first choice is Darby Green, a skilled nursing facility just minutes away from the Culvers’ home. He is pleased with the bright, clean facility and the location will allow him to visit whenever he can.

When Peter and Susan talk to the director of Darby Green about how Sundown can participate in Gwen’s care while she is a resident there, they are told that Sundown cannot attend Gwen in Darby Green because Darby Green does not have a contract with Sundown. The director states that Darby Green has a contract with EndCare Hospice, and he offers to help the Culvers transfer Gwen’s care to EndCare. Peter and Susan decide to think more about what they want to do.

Susan decides to research the Culvers’ options, and she consults an attorney about the rules governing hospice care. She discovers that the information the Culvers received from the director of Darby Green was incomplete. A patient has the right to choose his or her hospice provider, and the patient has the right to have the chosen hospice provider deliver hospice services in his or her home. When a patient is a resident in a nursing home, an assisted living or other facility, the facility is considered to be his or her home for purposes of determining where hospice care is to be provided.

In the case of Gwen’s residing at Darby Green and wanting to continue service with Sundown, it is true that Darby Green does not have an existing contract with Sundown. However, under federal law, Darby Green cannot refuse to put a contract in place with Sundown to allow Gwen to receive hospice care from the provider of her choice. The offer made by the

director to transfer Gwen’s care to EndCare is misleading; it implies (without actually stating) that only EndCare is allowed to provide hospice services to Darby Green’s residents.

While the Culver’s story is fictional, end-of-life decisions are momentous and jarring and often clouded by grief and anxiety. Since these decisions impact the quality of life experienced by families before and after the death of a loved one, we should be as well informed consumers of health care and end-of-life care as we would be if we were buying any other good or service. As 1,060,000 people sought hospice services in 2004 (an increase of 110,000 over the previous year), these issues and decisions are some that families face every day. Federal and state law mandate that:

- ♦ When a patient is certified as terminally ill and accepts hospice benefits, the benefits remain in force for certain periods of time. These are referred to as “election periods.” If a patient’s prognosis remains the same—that is, he or she is not expected to survive 6 months—the patient and the family may be unaware when a recertification occurs at the end of an election period (CFR TITLE 42 Sec. 418.21).
- ♦ Federal law allows the patient to choose his or her hospice provider, and, if not satisfied, the patient may elect to change to another hospice provider once during each election period (CFR TITLE 42 Sec. 418.30).
- ♦ Election of hospice benefits requires a waiver of some other Medicare benefits.
- ♦ The patient or his/her agent/representative may decide to stop hospice benefits. This “revocation of the election of hospice benefits” allows Medicare benefits that were waived to be resumed. At the end of that election period, if the patient meets the certification criteria, he/she may decide to resume hospice benefits at the end of the election period (the initial election period is 90 days; the subsequent period is 90 days).
- ♦ Hospice service providers may be organized as not-for-profit corporations or for-profit corporations. Choose your hospice organization on

Cont. p. 11

Hospice Choice *Cont. From p. 10*

the basis of the quality of service and personnel, as the distinction between for-profit and not-for-profit may be meaningless on the patient level. Remember when comparing the two that a not-for-profit organization cannot realize profit on the corporate level nor return profit to shareholders, but can pay competitive (or larger) salaries to their officers, directors and employees. Not-for-profit organizations typically solicit donations for operating funds, and an argument may be made that, in hospice organizations, the manpower should be spent in operations rather than in solicitation of funds;

- ♦ For-profit organizations may return their profits to their shareholders. However, because they have shareholders who have invested in the corporation, they may have more funding to spend on operations and have to spend less time and manpower soliciting funds.

Just as consumers may check the reputation of a business with the Better Business Bureau, potential hospice patients or their families may check with the state health department to see if the hospice program(s) they are considering have complaints pending. Under the state freedom of information act, a potential hospice patient may request the state survey summary report records about a hospice agency and its past record, including the hospice agency's plans of correction. It is helpful to request copies of all complaints about a hospice and state inspection survey summary reports relating to such complaints as well. Always specify a time period for which you are requesting records.

Here are some hospice providers in the Northern Virginia area:

Capital Hospice	703-538-2065
Community Hospices	866-234-7742
Evercare Hospice	703-762-1600
Goodwin House Hospice	703-578-7217
Heartland Hospice	703-273-8693
HomeCall Hospice	703-762-1600
Odyssey Health Care	703-821-9200
Right At Home	703-538-4584
VITAS Innovative	
Hospice Care	703-788-6680

Source: Sarah Parks is an estate planner with *Custom Estate Planning in Springfield, Virginia*. She has written numerous articles for the *Golden Gazette*. She teaches classes for Fairfax County Adult Education Department, Osher Learning in Retirement Institute, and Lifetime Learning Institute. Any questions about her classes or this article may be directed to Sarah at 703- 978-8707 or at customestate@cox.net.

Northern Virginia Senior Olympics

September 16-28

Register Now—20+ Events

The Northern Virginia Senior Olympics (NVSO) offers something for everyone, from track and field to chess. If you're at least 50 years old and enjoy *friendly* competition, consider competing in the NVSO to be held September 16-28. Last year more than 500 seniors competed.

The 2006 events include track and field, swimming, tennis, table tennis, pickleball, golf, miniature golf, bowling, billiards, basketball, bait casting, frisbee throw, shuffleboard, bunco, chess, cribbage, duplicate bridge, softball hit and throw, and team line dancing.

The track and field events will be held at Falls Church High School following opening ceremonies at 9:30 a.m. on Saturday, September 16. Other events, beginning Monday, September 18, will be held at various locations in the sponsoring jurisdictions.

Registration forms are available at senior centers and community centers, or by calling **703-228-3600**, Ext. 9996. Seniors also may download registration forms, rules, and other details at www.novaseniorolympics.com. The registration deadline is September 1; however, early registration is appreciated. Registration is \$10, which includes one event; additional events are \$1. Volunteers of any age are welcome to assist with events.

NVSO is sponsored by the cities of Alexandria, Fairfax and Falls Church and the counties of Arlington, Fairfax, Loudoun and Prince William. Additional sponsors are Goodwin House, Inc.; Greenspring Retirement Community; Sunrise Senior Living; BB&T; and Debbie Miller, McEneaney & Associates Realtors.

Low-Cost Rabies Clinics and Spay/Neuter Programs

Rabies Clinics

The Fairfax County Animal Shelter (4500 West Ox Road) offers rabies clinics four times a year (May, July, September, and November). The dates of the upcoming rabies clinics are:

- ▶ July 21, 12:00-2:00 p.m.
- ▶ September 10, 12:00-2:00 p.m.
- ▶ November 19, 12:00-2:00 p.m.

The cost is \$10 for both the 1-year and 3-year vaccines. All dogs should be on leashes and all cats in carriers. For information, call **703-830-1100**.

Spay/Neuter Programs

The Fairfax County Animal Shelter strongly encourages pet owners to have their pets spayed or neutered. Here are some low-cost surgery options:

- The Animal Welfare League of Alexandria has a discounted program open to anyone regardless of income. **703-838-4775**. www.alexandriaanimals.org.

- The Animal Welfare League of Arlington offers a low-cost program for people with household income below \$25,000.

The costs range from \$75-\$122 for cats, \$120-\$155 for dogs (depending on weight and sex). If you still can't afford the reduced fees, the League has another program for which you may qualify. Call **703-931-9241**. www.awla.org.

- Dominion Animal Hospital, **703-437-6900** (weekly spay/neuter clinic).

- Spay, Incorporated, offers a low-cost spay/neuter program with participating veterinarians throughout the Northern Virginia area. There are no income restrictions. **703-522-7920**.

- The Washington Animal Rescue League has a free spay/neuter clinic with no client income restrictions. It is open to residents of Virginia. Call **202-726-2273**.



Preparing Pets for Disaster Seminar

Tuesday, July 18, 7:30-9:00 p.m.

A panel of guest experts will help pet owners formulate emergency and disaster response plans for their companion animals. Sponsored by Fairfax Office of the American Red Cross of the National Capital Area, this workshop is free and open to the public. It will be held at the Mt. Vernon Governmental Center, 2511 Parkers Lane, Alexandria.

Preregistration is requested. Contact Jesse Viles, Community Outreach Coordinator, at **703-805-2332**, or e-mail VilesJ@redcross nca.org. No pets allowed.

Lunch N' Life Programs

Annandale-Springfield Shepherd's Center

When: Monday, July 17
Time: 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.
Speaker: Dan McKinnons, Chair, Annandale & Springfield Central Business Planning Committees
Where: Parkwood Baptist Church
8726 Braddock Rd., Annandale
Lunch: \$5/person
RSVP: 703-941-1419 by July 11

Fairfax-Burke Shepherd's Center

When: Thursday, July 27
Time: 12:00-2:00 p.m.
Program: Harmony Heritage Singers
(30-member barbershop group)
Where: Fairfax Presbyterian Church
10723 Main St., Fairfax
Lunch: \$8 person
RSVP: 703-620-0161 by July 20

Choosing Phone, Internet and Cable Services

The communications industry is making significant technological advances that result in more choices for consumers. Consumers can now get cable TV, telephone and high-speed Internet from more than one provider. But how do they choose?

The Fairfax County Department of Cable Communications and Consumer Protection and the Consumer Protection Commission are helping residents answer that question. As part of the Connecting Your Home initiative, Fairfax County has produced a brochure and a television show on Channel 16 detailing the offerings of the three major competing providers in the county—Comcast, Cox, and Verizon. Additional information is on the county's Web site at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/cable and www.fairfaxcounty.gov/consumer.

All three providers offer cable TV, telephone and Internet services—often called the “triple play.” By ordering all three services from one provider, residents can save money and consolidate their bills. The brochure, television show and Web site information provide an overview of how these three technologies work and where to go to get more information from each company.

The brochure is available at county government centers and libraries or by contacting the Department of Cable Communications and Consumer Protection at **703-324-5930** or **703-222-8435**, TTY 711. The television program, *Connecting Your Home*, began airing on Channel 16 in June and will air Fridays and Saturdays at 3:00 p.m., Sundays at 1:00 p.m. and Tuesdays at 10:00 p.m. The program also will be available on video-on-demand at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/cable.

HEALTH INSURANCE QUESTIONS?
Call the Virginia Insurance Counseling & Assistance Program (VICAP) at
703-324-5851.

InfoEXPO

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11 a.m. – 3 p.m.

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- Informative Exhibits
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Consumer Alert **Sheriff's Office Not Involved in** **Door-to-Door Fundraising**

The Fairfax County Sheriff's Office has issued a press release to alert the public that it is NOT associated or affiliated with the National Organization of Deputy Sheriffs, Inc. This group recently has been soliciting door-to-door in Fairfax County.

The Fairfax County Sheriff's Office will never engage in any door-to-door solicitations. Any door-to-door solicitation done by the National Organization of Deputy Sheriffs, Inc., is not endorsed or condoned by the Fairfax County Sheriff's Office. Any group or organization conducting door-to-door solicitation that states or implies that it is raising funds for the Sheriff's Office is intentionally misleading you.

For comments or questions, please contact Sheriff Stan Barry at **703-246-3260**.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

One of the best ways to spend your time is to volunteer. Everyone benefits from volunteering. The agencies receive the help they need, and the volunteers receive satisfaction from helping others.

The **Meals on Wheels (MOW) program** needs volunteers to deliver meals in Annandale, Baileys Crossroads, Chantilly/Centreville, Fairfax, Falls Church, Herndon/Reston, Little River Glen, Tyson's, and Vienna. Volunteers who speak Vietnamese are needed in Falls Church. The job involves picking up meals at specified sites from 10:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m., and delivering the meals by 1:00 p.m. Drivers may choose to deliver meals on a daily, weekly, biweekly, monthly or substitute basis. A volunteer treasurer for the Eastern MOW group and Little River Glen in Annandale and a group coordinator for Forest Glen in Chantilly also are needed. For information, call the Volunteer Intake Line at **703-324-5406**, TTY 703-449-1186, or e-mail melanie.mitchell@fairfaxcounty.gov.

The **Fairfax Area Agency on Aging's Volunteer Home Services** program needs volunteers in the Annandale, Falls Church, McLean, Reston, and Route 1 areas. Volunteers provide a variety of services to help clients maintain independence while living in their own homes. The services include grocery shopping, light housekeeping, minor home maintenance, transportation to medical appointments, and errands. Volunteers are on call and help when available. Call the Volunteer Intake Line at **703-324-5406**.

The **Northern Virginia Long-Term Care Ombudsman program** needs volunteer help with projects such as data entry, correspondence, filing, event-planning and reference list maintenance. Knowledge of MS Word and Excel and strong English skills are necessary. The time commitment is flexible—weekdays, 5-8 hours per week in Fairfax.

Volunteer advocates also are needed 4 hours/week to promote the quality of life and care for people in local nursing homes and assisted living facilities, meeting one-on-one

with residents. Good diplomacy and communication skills are required. The next training will be September 26, 27, and October 6. Call **703-324-5435**, TTY 703-449-1186, or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/ltcombudsman.

Our Daily Bread in Fairfax needs volunteers to purchase, sort, and deliver groceries to families in Fairfax County on the weekends. Also needed are phone team volunteers. This involves taking referrals from social workers for financial/food assistance requests one day a week. Call Sarah White at **703-273-8829**.

The **Shepherd's Center of Oakton-Vienna** provides services to older adults. Volunteers are needed to do minor home repairs, make friendly phone calls, provide transportation to medical appointments, do grocery shopping, and other errands. Call Kara Kelch at **703-281-0538**, or office@scov.org.

To have a volunteer opportunity considered for this column, please e-mail or fax your submission to **Retha Lockhart** by the first of the month one month in advance.

E-mail:

retha.lockhart@fairfaxcounty.gov

Fax: 703-324-3583

Phone: 703-324-5407

The Golden Gazette is available in large print, recorded format, and online (www.fairfaxcounty.gov/aaa). Call 703-324-5633.

CAREGIVER'S CORNER

Visit the Web site at http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/aaa/caregivers_corner_nl.htm.

Third Party Landlord Notification—New Law

On July 1, 2006, a new law, Virginia Code §55-248.9:1.B, went into effect. It provides that most Virginia tenants may designate a third party to receive duplicate copies of notices from the landlord, as well as copies of any unlawful detainers (a paper filed in court by the landlord to begin the eviction process). A third party may be a family member, a close friend, or possibly a case manager or social service agency. If the tenant designates such a person, then the landlord is required to send notices of problems to that person, as well as to the tenant.

This new option will be particularly helpful to elderly or disabled tenants who might occasionally need help remembering to pay the rent or who might be in and out of the hospital and therefore unable to pay the rent when it comes due. The third party notice ensures that someone besides the tenant is made aware of any problems under the lease—including not only rent, but also any other violations of the lease—so that the third party can get involved to correct the problem early in the process before the landlord begins eviction proceedings.

The third party will not be legally liable for the tenant's rent or for any other problems under the lease. It is important that the tenant chooses someone who will pay attention if they receive a copy of a notice from a landlord about a problem and who will make every effort to work with the tenant to promptly resolve any problems with the landlord. The tenant should talk to the person in advance to be sure he or she is willing to receive the notices.

If you are a tenant who is interested in designating a third party, provide your landlord the name, address, and phone number of the person you want to receive copies of the notices.

Even if you do not think you need assistance now, consider naming a close family member or friend so that the landlord has a contact should problems arise later. You never know when you may need help and it is best to have named someone and have this designation already in place before you run into problems and need help.

If you are a concerned family member or friend who knows someone who could benefit from the third party designation, please talk with the tenant about this option now and encourage the tenant to contact the landlord to designate a third party.

Because this is an option for tenants, but not something a tenant is required to do, the tenant must take the first step by notifying the landlord if he wants to designate a third party and by giving the landlord the name, address, and phone number of the designated person or agency. Nothing will happen unless the tenant contacts the landlord with the name and address of the designated third party so that the landlord knows to whom to send the duplicate notices.

If you have questions about the third party option, call your local legal aid office. In Fairfax County, contact Legal Services of Northern Virginia, **703-246-4500** or Potomac Legal Aid, **703-532-2525**.

Source: Virginia Department for the Aging.



**For information on volunteering,
call the Fairfax Area Agency on
Aging's Volunteer Intake Line at
703-324-5406.**

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

July 5-August 2. 12:30-2:30 p.m. Poetry Writing Workshop. You will reflect on moments in your life, whether it is a snowfall or a grandchild's first steps that you wish to capture, elaborate on and record in writing. Classic and contemporary poetry will be read and serve as models. \$20 resident/\$40 nonresident. To register, complete a form at the Reston Community Center, 2310 Colts Neck Rd., Reston. **703-476-4500**.

July 8. 10:30 a.m. Hosta Garden Tour. Chief Horticulturist Doris Rodriguez will lead a tour through the Hosta Garden. Meadowlark Botanical Gardens, 9750 Meadowlark Gardens Ct., Vienna. **703-255-3631**.

July 8. 11:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. World War II Living History. Spend time with the 51st Engineer Combat Battalion and others as they recreate military and civilian roles during WW II. Talk to re-enactors about their jobs, living quarters, food and life in the 1940s. \$6/adult, \$4/senior and child. Sully Historic Site, 3601 Sully Rd., Chantilly. **703-437-1794**. www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/Sully.

July 10. 2:00 p.m. Chinese Paper Art. Learn this fascinating skill from an expert. George Mason Regional Library, 7001 Little River Turnpike, Annandale. To register, call **703-256-3800**. www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library.

July 15 & July 22. 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. AARP Driver Safety Program. For drivers age 50 and older. This classroom course will help develop safe, defensive-driving techniques. You will determine ways to handle adverse driving conditions and hazards, as well as learn the effects of aging and medications on driving skills. Bring a bag lunch and beverage for each day. \$10 (make check payable to AARP). McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. Advanced registration is required. **703-790-0123**.

July 26. 6:00-10:00 p.m. Pet First Aid and CPR Class. When disaster strikes your 4-legged companion, you need to know how to manage your pet's problem in the first critical moments until you can get to a veterinarian. Learn how to stop bleeding, handle choking incidents, perform chest compressions, fashion a splint, take your pet's pulse, etc. \$45 includes workshop, book, and certificate of completion. For registration and further information, call Lake Accotink Park, 7500 Accotink Park Rd., Springfield. **703-569-3464**. www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks.

July 27. 8:00 p.m. The prize-winning 90-piece City of Fairfax Band will enliven the evening by playing light pop, Sousa marches, TV and movie specials, and other favorites. Bring your own chair. Veterans Am-

phitheater, 10455 Armstrong St., City of Fairfax. **703-757-0220**.

Classes for Caregivers

July 11, 18, 25 & August 1 (Tuesdays) 1:30-3:00 p.m.

The Alzheimer's Family Day Center Classes for Caregivers series is designed to help families dealing with dementia grow in their caregiving role by providing helpful information and links to community resources. Guest experts speak on topics that range from legal/financial issues to long-distance caregiving. Attend one class or all four.

During class meetings, free respite care is offered at the Alzheimer's Family Day Center, 2812 Old Lee Highway, Suite 210, Fairfax. To register, please call Anna at **703-204-4664**.



Fairfax County & SeniorNavigator

YOUR CONNECTION TO HEALTH, DISABILITY AND AGING RESOURCES.

Go to www.fairfaxcounty.gov/seniors and click on **SeniorNavigator**. No computer? Call SeniorNavigator toll free at 1-866-393-0957, TTY 711, to locate the nearest SeniorNavigator Center.